



HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Statement of Subcommittee Chairman Dan Donovan (R-NY)

Joint Hearing: Subcommittee on Transportation and Protective Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, & Communication

“Securing Our Surface Transportation Systems: Examining the Department of Homeland Security’s Role in Surface Transportation Technologies”

January 30, 2018

Remarks as Prepared

Surface transportation systems serve over ten billion riders annually. Like me - I am one of those ten billion riders – these people depend on the reliability and safety of this critical infrastructure, and so does our economy.

The open systems, multiple hubs, and lack of screening has made surface transportation systems a target for terrorist organizations and their sympathizers for years. We have seen attacks in Brussels, London, and most recently in New York City.

Last December, Akayed Ullah tried to detonate a suicide bomb in a walkway underneath the Port Authority Bus Terminal during rush hour. Thankfully, he constructed a faulty IED. However, this attempted terrorist attack is a stark reminder of how vulnerable our surface transportation systems are to terrorist attacks.

Surface transportation system operators are continuously looking for innovative technology to help create a multi- layer approach to security. However, this search for technological solutions has been bogged down by numerous obstacles.

That is why both of our Subcommittees have been extensively looking at how technology can help make our surface transportation systems more secure, without impeding their operations.

Last November, our Subcommittees held a roundtable with surface transportation system operators and heard some of the challenges they face when trying to integrate new technology into their systems. Specifically,

- Technology that is deemed successful in a lab doesn’t always work once integrated into a mass transit system. Thus, there is a need for test beds and pilot locations to adequately test this technology. And,
- There is a need for a technology clearinghouse where operators can review impartial assessments of the technology available to them.

Now, it is time for us to hear from the Department of Homeland Security, specifically TSA and S&T, on how they are helping surface transportation operators with research and development, test and evaluation, and other issues surrounding new technology. I'm interested in learning more about how S&T and TSA are working together to ensure our surface transportation operators have the tools and resources they need to keep the riders safe, specifically with regard to technology.

I want to thank the witnesses for being here this afternoon and I look forward to our discussion.

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